

ABSTRACT

A system (10), computer program, and method for automatically and periodically conducting an inventory of one or more network assets (12) or resources, such as, for example, servers, workstations, or firewalls, using an agent (16) running on each asset (12) to perform the inventory and collect inventory data which may thereafter be sent in a secure manner to a designated location where it can be parsed and from which pertinent information can be saved. Thereafter, the stored information may be used, for example, to generate inventory reports for determining network vulnerabilities, checking software licenses, and tracking network assets. In a preferred embodiment, the system (10) broadly comprises one or more separate instances of an inventory agent (16); one or more collection servers (18); a directory server (20); and a reporting server (22). The present invention also makes use of digital certificates for identification, authentication, and, optionally, encryption purposes.

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